GREEN SCREEN TECH

How to use this for programs, publicity and beyond!

WHAT IS A GREEN SCREEN ?

A green screen is used as a backdrop in chroma key photography. Blue screens or other uniform colors are sometimes used in this process as well. The main thing is to have a uniform color to remove the background and replace it with something else.

HOW DOES THIS WORK?

- Chroma keying apps allows media technicians AKA LIBRARIANS to easily separate green screens from the people standing in front of them and replace those solid color backgrounds with pretty much anything:
- Favorite movie sets
- Far away galaxies
- Dangerous animals
- Famous buildings
- Historical settings

- A green screen set -This can be bought from Amazon or Best Buy for about $100. You'll get a fabric green screen, lights and a frame for the fabric.
  - OR

- A DIY green screen-This can be put together on a budget of less than $10. You'll need a cheap green tablecloth, tape, and several light sources to aim at the green screen.

- A smart device with a camera: a smart phone or iPad does fine.

- A green screen app (free!)

- Backgrounds (don't worry, they're free too!)

- ## Set up your green screen.

- Turn on all the lights. Position your subject in the middle. Move the lights around until you have no shadows. Generally, this will mean lights in 3 different directions. Right, left and overhead are typical but play around!

- If you have a kit, try placing one of the lights on the floor to illuminate your subjects' feet for full body shots.

- If using a DIY screen, head and shoulder shots of subjects are best. Use all lighting sources available including windows, overhead lights and lamps!

- Take a few pictures of a subject with your device's camera. People are best but objects will do. These are just for practice so be creative with poses and style.

FINDING THE RIGHT BACKGROUNDS

- For best results, backgrounds must be at least 1000 x 700 pixels for head and shoulder shots.

- Full body shots need backgrounds of at least 2000 x 1400.

- Wallpaper sites are generally your best bet for finding picture files this big. Alphacoders.com and wallpapercave.com have been our favorite places to find great backgrounds.

- Backgrounds with slightly off center focal points are easiest to work with.

- Save the backgrounds from the site as big as possible to your device.

- Choose a few more backgrounds than you think you need for your event. As you check the backgrounds with your practice pictures, you'll find some that don't look good. That's ok, you'll have plenty that look fabulous!
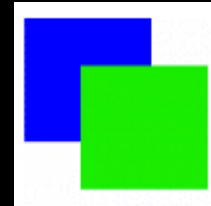
1024 X 768

2734 X 1538

WORKING WITH YOUR PICTURES

- Download the app you want to use to your device.
- I recommend the FREE version of Bluescreen-it!.
- Sadly, this is only available on Apple.

- Open the photos app on your device and edit your green screen shots. Crop out everything that is not your subject and green background.

From this: To this: Then SAVE the photo!
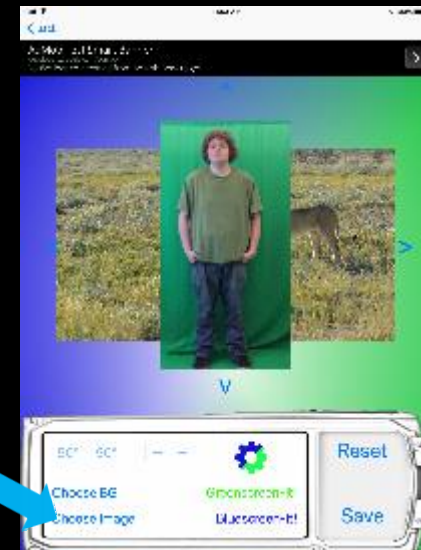
WORKING WITH YOUR DEVICE

- Open the Bluescreen-It! App and select the still photo option.

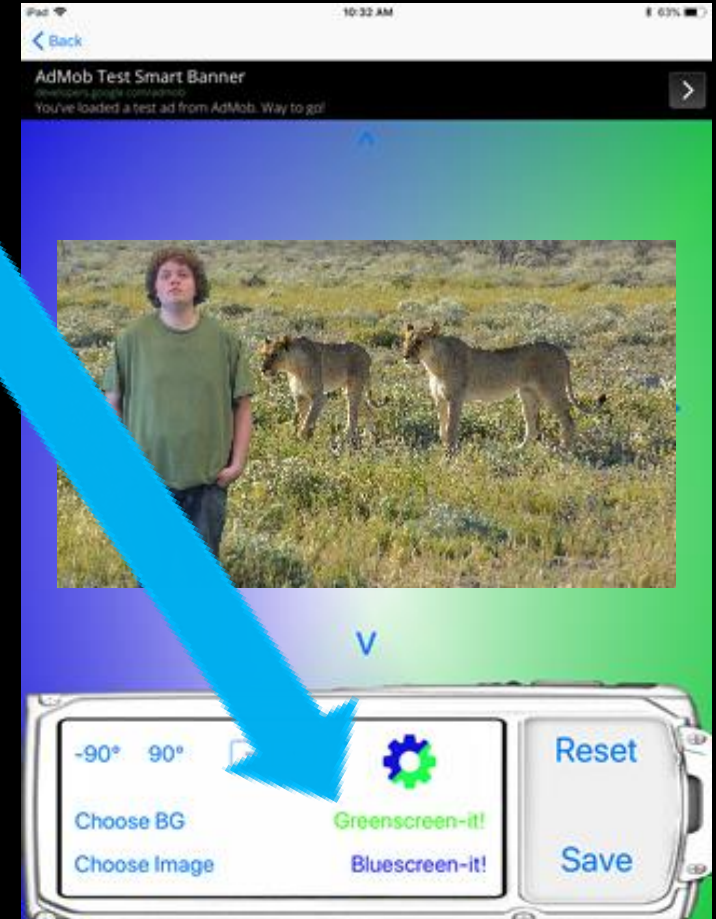- Tap Choose BG and select the Photo Album option. Then select the background from your camera roll.

Once your background appears: Tap Choose Image and select the Photo Album option. Then select edited green screen photo from Photo Album.

USING GREENSCREEN-IT!

- Once that picture appears, tap Greenscreen-It!
- The green background will disappear.
- Use the – and + keys to adjust your subject's size.
- Use the blue arrows up, down, left and right to position your subject in the background.
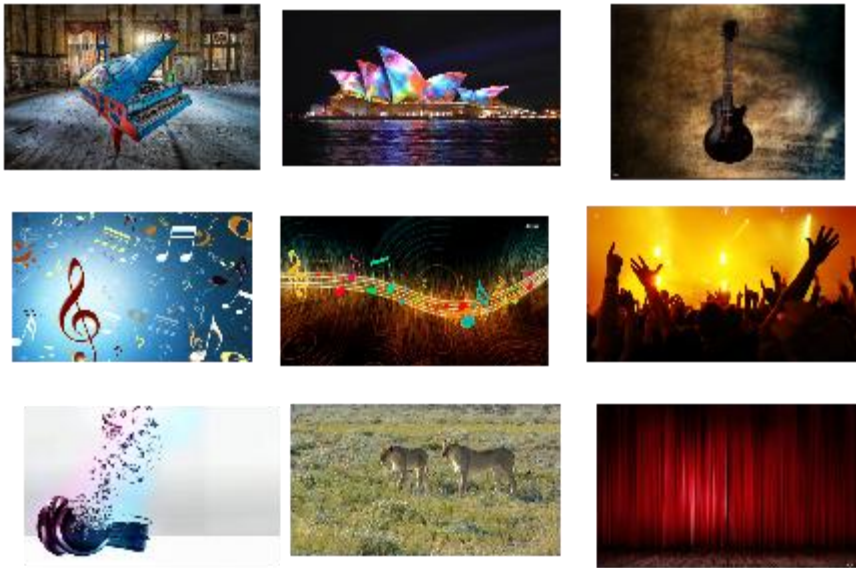- Tap "Save": photo will save in your camera roll.

CHECKING YOUR WORK!

- Don't close the app! Just press the Home button and then…

- Open your Photos app and find your new picture to check your work.

- Does the picture look ok? Is your subject blurry? Does it look believable?

- If it's good, save that background in your favorites. It's a keeper!

- If it's not quite right, go back to the Bluescreen-It! app. Try making some adjustments: Move the subject around a bit. Try making the subject bigger or smaller. Try using the subject's picture ¾ length or just head and shoulders.

- If after your adjustments, you still don't like it; try a different green screen picture. If you still don't like it, discard that background! It's not a good one!

DISPLAYING YOUR CHOICES

Once you have backgrounds that you know work well, it's time to show off your offerings for your event.

- A large poster is nice if you have a roll printer but flyers like below also work well. Printing a poster or multiple flyers allows patrons to choose while they wait in line so you can focus on the photography.

Tip: E-mail yourself the backgrounds from your device to easily place them into a poster or flyer.

- Set up your green screen at least an hour before.

- Remove as many wrinkles as possible. Tape down corners.

- Make sure cords are not easily tripped over - a power strip is handy!

- A tripod is nice if you have one. If not, have a table nearby to put your device down when working with the apps.

- Display your background choices.

- Take a green screen photo of your staff or a volunteer. Check your lights and reposition if needed. Use that photo to make a whimsical image using one of your event backgrounds. Use social media to publicize your event.
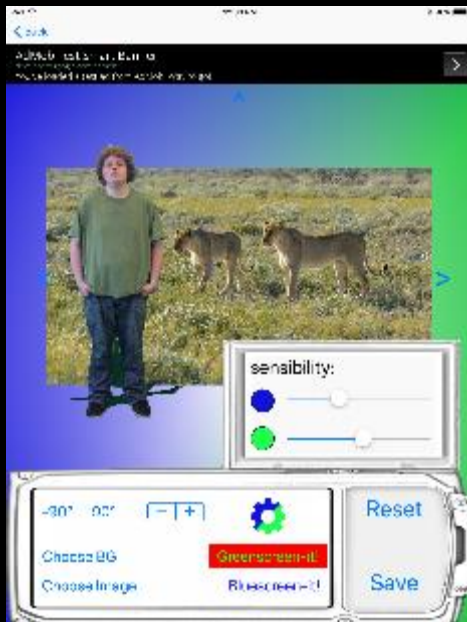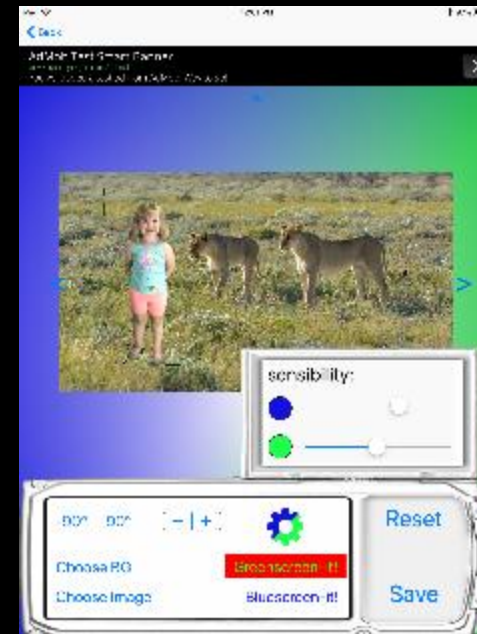
PHOTO TROUBLESHOOTING
My subject is disappearing with the background!

- You will need to adjust how much blue and how much green the chroma key software should use. Use the cog to adjust.

If your subject is wearing green: Try turning the green up and the blue down.

If your subject is wearing teal: Turn the blue up around ¾ and the green at ½ way up.

TROUBLESHOOTING

- Occasionally, your subject will be wearing a shade of teal or lime that seems to disappear along with the background no matter what you do, work with it!

My subject looks blurry in the photos

- Check to be sure the subject image you're using is good quality.
- Try not shrinking the subject as much. Use them full sized or just a bit smaller.
- Check and adjust green and blue sensibilities.
- Try a different background. If it looks good in a different background, either the first background was too small for the subject or poor quality.
- If changing the background is not desired; try using the subject full size as a head and shoulders shot rather than shrinking them into the background.
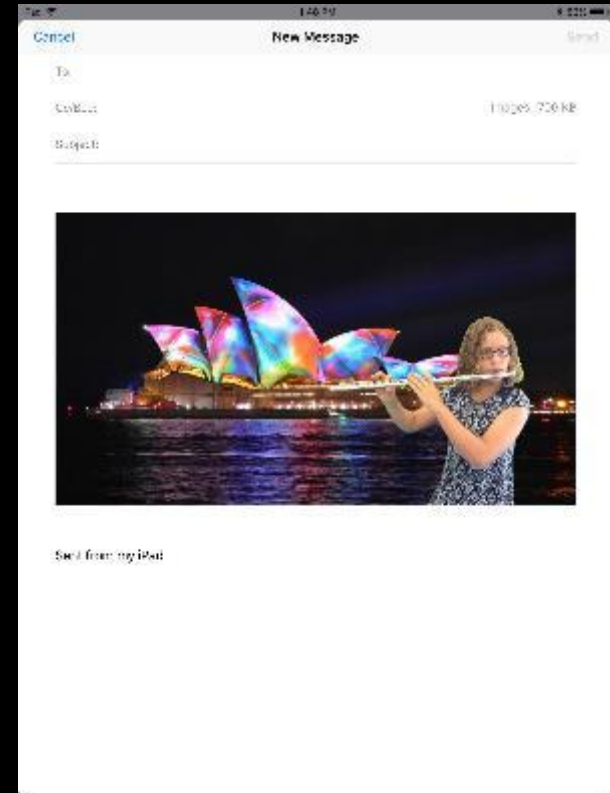
WHERE WILL I USE THIS?

- Green Screens are fun for MOVIES: Have 3-5 backgrounds from the movie you're showing and take green screen photos for your patrons just before the lights go down!

- Green Screens are fun for PARTIES: Harry Potter / Fantastic Beasts, holiday or Summer Reading Kickoff, green screen pictures are fun for all ages! Have 5-10 backgrounds as a photo booth extraordinaire!

- Green Screens are fun for PUBLICITY: People will come to see what you've got going on the green screen and this is your moment to tell them all about your LIBRARY! Have 10-20 backgrounds for a 2-3 hour mixed ages event.

- Green Screens are a fun TECHNOLOGY: Teens and older children will flock to green screen tech programming! Have 5-10 backgrounds so they can learn how this works!

HOW DO I GET THE PHOTO TO THE PATRON?

- After you've taken the photo, used the Bluescreen-It! App and saved the resulting photo, press the home button and open your photos and go to camera roll. Tap on the photo you just made and check to see that the photo is good. Then tap the send icon and then tap mail. Have the patron type in their own email address and in the subject line, type: Pic. Tap send and the photo is on its way via the Wi-Fi.

- If you don't have Wi-Fi in the building you're
doing this in, you can turn your phone into a
"Hotspot" and send the email along but this
will eat up your data. It's an emergency measure!

GREEN SCREEN TIPS

- As you find backgrounds that look good with your practice photos, move them into your favorites or a special album in the photo app. That will make them easy to find as you take green screen photos of your patrons.

- Better to have more backgrounds than you need.

- Exotic locales, animals and spectacular nature are always popular.

- Think general: a galaxy background works for fans of Star Trek, Star Wars, Guardians of the Galaxy, and Doctor Who.

- I highly recommend only using backgrounds you have previously checked rather than trying to find one on the fly.

- Instagram, Facebook, Tweet, Snap, or Pin a completed photo for patrons. They may not know what green screens do but they'll love the photos!

THANK YOU!

Any questions?

THE BLUESCREEN-IT! PROCESS

Take a picture using the green screen.

Ask the patron what background they want. This will help you pose them properly.

Light up your subject. Eliminate shadows as much as possible.

Take the picture in your device's photo app.

Take at least 2 if not 3 photos to ensure that there is at least one really good one. With small children or groups take more!

Crop the photo you like best until there is nothing but subject and green screen. Save photo!

Open Bluescreen-It!

Open the Bluescreen-It ! App.

Select the still photo option.

Select the background by tapping on Choose BG and then photo album and then favorites or other album and then the desired background.

Select the patrons' photo by tapping Chose Image and then Photo Album and then Camera Roll. The Patron's edited image is likely the last one. Select that photo.

Tap Greenscreen-it!. Adjust blue and green sensibilities if needed by tapping on the blue/green cog. Adjust the size of subject if needed with the plus and minus signs.

Guide the subject to the desired position by using the blue arrows.

When the photo looks right, tap Save.

Check your work!

Press the device Home button. Don't close Bluescreen-It! app!

Open the photos app.

Check to see if the patron's new photo looks right. Is the subject blurry? Is the subject proportional to the picture? If not, return to Bluescreen-it! and adjust accordingly.

If all is well, tap on the send icon. Then tap the mail and have the patron enter their email address. Put something in the subject line like Pic or their name so it does not go automatically to their junk mail. Then send it and you're ready for the next patron!